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ABSTRACT

Oregon's Education Act for the 21st Century has profound implications for the educational system in Oregon. It involves the implementation of statewide standards, represents a major change from a time-based to a standards-based educational system, and requires schools to ensure that all students achieve the performance standards for each curricular area. This report to the Governor's Quality Education Task Force delves into the implications and realities of implementing educational reform. The report focuses on each of the following standards: academic-content, performance, and opportunity-to-learn. To give all students adequate opportunity to learn, the Oregon Association of School Executives School Funding Coalition recommends smaller class sizes; more training and support for teachers; the expansion of instructional hours and days; adequate, up-to-date learning materials and tools; sufficient staffing; additional funding to foster strong educational leadership; and investment in school infrastructure. Finally, statewide discussion among all constituent groups is needed to develop a shared vision for public education. (Contains 18 references.) (LMI)

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KEYS TO A QUALITY EDUCATION

Prepared by the

Oregon Association of School Executives
School Funding Coalition

for

The Governor's
Quality Education Work Group

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Prepared by the

Oregon Association of School Executives
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Keys to a Quality Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Standards-Based Education

Introduction

A tidal wave of change will soon hit the educational system in Oregon. That change involves the implementation of Oregon's Education Act for the 21st Century, which sets academic and performance standards for all students statewide.

The significance of the change is threefold: First, it represents the implementation of **statewide standards**. Instead of local school boards establishing achievement standards and curricula for students, the state has set uniform requirements and standards for all school districts.

"The goal is not to help only **some** *or* **most** *students achieve up to the standards, but to help* **all** *of them achieve at that level."*

Second, it represents a major **change from a time-based to a standards-based educational system**. Under a time-based system, the quality and level of a student's education was determined by the amount of time that individual had spent in school and a demonstrated level of achievement in the classroom. Under a standards-based system, students must demonstrate that they have achieved specific standards or levels of performance.

Third, standards-based education will require schools to ensure that **all students** -- regardless of innate ability, economic background, family support or previous school experience -- **achieve the performance standards** for each curricular area. The goal is not to help only *some* or *most* students achieve up to the standards, but to help *all* of them achieve at that level.

The recommendations made in each section are not to be taken as elective choices. They are a collection of interrelated variables. Each makes a difference for each other. If we are to have a real effect on student learning and school retooling, the recommendations must be seen as a package.

This report to the Governor's Quality Education Task Force delves into the implications and realities of implementing educational reform. The report is intended to stimulate dialogue between educators and policy makers about the components of a quality education and what it costs to provide it.

Report Overview

The report focuses on each of the following areas:

Focus On Academic Content, Performance And Opportunity To Learn Standards

1. **Academic Content Standards** -- the body of knowledge and skills that all students in Oregon are expected to master, under the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century;

2. **Performance Standards** -- the specific levels of achievement that all students are expected to attain, as established by the State Department of Education;

3. **Opportunity to Learn Standards** -- the components that affect a student's ability to learn, and the elements that must be provided for all students to have appropriate opportunities to learn.

Following is a summary discussion on each of these topics.

"School leaders, teachers, and administrators need training and professional development to acquire new skills and adapt to new expectations."

1. While school districts have already begun putting the new **academic content standards** and curriculum changes into place, they will need adequate resources to implement them fully and successfully. In particular, they will need continuous staff development at the district level and reform of Oregon's teacher training programs to retrain the workforce. Teachers are being asked to teach in new ways, as well as to interact with students, parents, administrators and each other in new ways. They need training and professional development to acquire new skills and methodologies and adapt to new expectations.

Timelines Are Critical

School districts also need reasonable timelines to implement educational reform. They need high quality, continuous support from the Department of Education, Education Service Districts, the Oregon Department of Higher Education and the Oregon Legislature. School districts want to be held accountable to performance standards while still being given the flexibility to implement each part of the Education Act for the 21st Century in the way that best meets their students' needs.

Major Statewide Communication Program Is Needed

2. **Performance standards** have been set for student achievement, teacher performance evaluation and program evaluation. Parents, teachers, students and the general public must understand what these standards are and how and why they are being used, so they can support and participate in the assessment processes.

   In general, a major statewide communication program is needed to explain the reforms that are coming and the revolutionary change from a time-based system to a standards-based system.

   In addition, local school districts need to inform their communities about what is happening in the local schools. The districts will need to step up communication and outreach efforts to involve the public in continuous school improvement.

"The state must assure that schools are able to provide all students the opportunity to learn up to the new standards level."

3. The new standards-based system will require that all students be given the **opportunity to learn** up to standards levels. The key factors affecting opportunity to learn are:

Research Shows Some Factors Are Very Important To Student Learning

- **Class Size** -- the number of students per classroom
- **Quality Teachers** -- well-qualified, properly trained teachers with adequate opportunities for ongoing professional development
- **Time** -- the length of the school day and school year, time spent on task, pre-school and kindergarten programs, alternative learning programs and number of hours in the work day and work week for teachers
- **Learning Material/Tools** -- resources such as textbooks, lab equipment, classroom equipment and supplies, computers and software and other learning materials, all of which must be adequate and up-to-date
- **School Environment and Culture** -- school safety and orderliness, values, attitudes, support and respect for students, and orientation to the whole child
- **Leadership and Governance** -- leadership by superintendents and principals, state and local leaders, school boards, administrators, teachers and staff, employers and employees, and parents and citizen committees in achieving educational reform and providing opportunities to learn
- **Infrastructure/Services** -- the services inside a school, relating to students, transportation, business operations, personnel, data processing, record-keeping, communications and other processes; and the infrastructure for tracking student achievement to help all students achieve to standard

"We are looking at the way schools operate, the way teachers teach, the way students learn and the way performance is measured."

Fewer Than 20 Students In A Class

Key Recommendations

While school administrators and educators support the educational reforms being adopted, they are concerned about the need for adequate funding and resources to achieve it. School people recognize and are prepared to shift funding from old system program to new system program. That is a part of real reform. At the same time, when the resources are not adequate, the state must step up and make new resources available. The reforms constitute a wholesale change in the way schools operate, the way teachers teach, the way students learn and the way performance is measured.

Consequently, educational reform requires funding and resources for retraining teachers, retooling facilities, adding and upgrading technology, acquiring additional space and materials for teaching and providing individualized attention.

To give all students adequate opportunity to learn, the Oregon Association of School Executives School Funding Coalition recommends:

1. **Smaller class sizes.** Research indicates that classes with fewer than 20 students per teacher produce achievement gains; above 30 students per teacher results in achievement slow-downs. Smaller classes give teachers more time with each student, reduce behavioral problems and contribute to a calmer, more orderly environment.

2. **More training and support for teachers.** Oregon needs a larger base of qualified teachers, especially for math, science and

Increase The Base Of Qualified Teachers

technology, as well as second language and special education. Financial incentives, tuition waivers or rebates can help encourage more people to pursue a career in education. At the same time, funding for staff development is critically important to help current teachers adjust to the demands, needs and challenges of a standards-based system oriented to helping all students reach specific levels of achievement.

Increase Time For Instruction, Preparation, Evaluation, Communication, And Professional Development

3. **Expansion of instructional hours and days.** Funding is needed for a longer school day, summer school/extended year instruction, full-day kindergarten, preschool for students in need and the provision of evening, Saturday and tutorial classes for special instruction. Contracts with teachers, administrators and support staff should span 12 months. Teaching time should be based on a work design that allows adequate time for instruction as well as preparation and planning, evaluation, parent communication, professional development and other teacher needs and responsibilities.

Provide Adequate Technology And Learning Resources

4. **Adequate, up-to date learning materials and tools, from textbooks to computers.** Sufficient, stable funding is needed to allow every public school classroom in Oregon to network and link to the Internet. The recommendations call for one computer for every teacher and one for every two students; plus current textbooks and software. Other recommendations call for a statewide library system, telephone access in every classroom, distance learning network and clerical support for teachers.

Provide Safe, Orderly Schools

5. **Sufficient staffing to assure safe, orderly schools that provide an environment conducive to learning.** Schools must be safe from hazards as well as any threat of violence. Funding should be provided to support substance abuse prevention education at all grade levels. Schools should offer co-curricular and after-school activities that appeal to a cross-section of students and provide an alternative for latch-key children.

"Professional Development helps good instructional leaders who innovate as well as implement reform."

6. **Additional funding to foster and develop strong educational leadership.** Funding is needed for staff development of school board members and administrators so schools can attain higher levels of student achievement. Teachers need professional development in order to be good instructional leaders and to innovate as well as implement new teaching tools. In addition, the management-to-staff in school districts should equal that of high-performing organizations in the private sector.

Don't Forget Business, Operations and Support Services

7. **Investment in school infrastructure.** Investment is needed to help all districts receive, report and transfer data, and to maintain sufficient staffing for transportation, maintenance, accounting, budget management, legal services, personnel services, communication, food services, data processing and telecommunications.

Conclusion

"This School Funding Coalition believes the best way to bring Oregonians back together and, at the same time decide the proper level of school funding, is to determine a shared vision for public education in this state."

The debate over school funding in Oregon has become highly emotional and divisive. The task of reaching new, higher standards is even more daunting when we recognize that the public is less inclined to be supportive and to participate with the local efforts that will make the change work. The political climate and popular media foster suspicion, distrust and cynicism about the motives of public educators. This School Funding Coalition believes the best way to bring Oregonians back together and, at the same time, decide the proper level of school funding, is to determine a shared vision for public education in this state. The discussion must include elected officials and other policy makers, school administrators and staff, teachers, parents, students and the general public. If all Oregonians are committed to the vision, they will support the funding necessary to achieve it.

It is our fervent hope that this document will stir productive debate and discussion on what we want of our schools and our children, and will ultimately help light the way toward an exemplary, outstanding educational system for the children of Oregon in the 21st Century.

"If all Oregonians are committed to the vision, they will support the funding necessary to achieve it."

Keys to A Quality Education

Introduction

Oregon is on the threshold of a tidal wave of change as it moves to a standards-based educational system. The Oregon Legislature has mandated a major change in public education throughout the state. Instead of local school district boards establishing achievement standards and curricula for students, as in the past, Oregon's Education Act for the 21st Century sets statewide requirements and standards for all students in all school districts.

While school administrators and educators generally support this movement, they are concerned about the need for additional funding and resources to achieve it. Oregon's public schools are faced with the dual challenge of maintaining existing programs as well as implementing a wholesale change in the way teachers teach, the way students learn and the way performance is measured.

This report to the Governor's Quality Education Work Group is intended to: 1) help establish the key components for implementing a standards-based statewide educational system; 2) serve as the baseline document for estimating the cost of providing a quality education; and 3) stimulate dialogue between educators and policy makers.

The report contains three sections:

- Academic Content Standards, based on the curriculum framework required in the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century;
- Performance Standards, including student achievement assessment, teacher performance evaluation and program evaluation; and
- Opportunity to Learn Standards, which are research-based variables that affect student achievement and performance.

Each section provides a definition of the issue, a discussion and a set of recommendations. The report also includes Addenda to give interested readers more background on each of the areas presented.

The report addresses many of the fundamental issues related to the change from a time-based to a standards-based educational system. In the past, the quality or level of an individual's education was gauged by the amount of time that individual had spent in school and a demonstrated level of achievement in the classroom. Successful completion of a certain number of hours in required classes or subject areas resulted in the awarding of a diploma.

A standards-based system operates differently. Standards or expected performance levels are established, and a student is assessed based on the extent to which he or she has demonstrated achievement of the standard. Students receive certification of performance in the form of a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) or Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM).

Standards-based education will require schools to ensure that all students, regardless of innate ability, economic background, family support or previous school experience, achieve the performance standards for each curricular area. The standards currently established by the State of Oregon are very high. Based on Spring 1995 state assessment scores, it is anticipated up to 50 percent of Oregon students will initially fail to reach the State's new standards. The likely result will be worried or angry parents, public uproar and frustrated teachers and administrators trying to find the time and resources they need to help the failing 50 percent achieve to standard.

The implementation of the statewide legislative mandates for a standards-based school system throughout Oregon requires changes in virtually everything from teaching strategies to the assessment of students' academic achievement to the education of the public about the changes that are being implemented.

Educational reform in Oregon will require comprehensive staff development as well as retooled facilities, additional technology, appropriate types of classroom space, additional labs for biology and chemistry, and more. It will require more and better communication, understanding and teamwork among school staff, parents, employers and the community. Without adequate funding for these changes, educational reform cannot succeed.

Oregon's superintendents recognize the magnitude of the challenge ahead, made even more critical by the school funding crisis in Oregon. We are committed to working in partnership with the governor and legislature as well as with local civic, business and parent leaders to solve those fundamental problems and, together, to pursue our commitment to make Oregon citizens the best educated population in the United States and the world.

I Academic Content Standards: What Schools Teach; What Students Learn

Issue

In 1991, the Oregon Legislature approved the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century, a major reform act for education. The original Act was modified in 1995 to focus more precisely on academic standards. The Act provides a new curriculum framework and requires statewide assessment of content standards for Certificates of Initial and Advanced Mastery. No funding was provided for implementing the Act.

On September 19, 1996, the State Board of Education adopted an ambitious set of academic standards and benchmarks for all students in Oregon, in keeping with the new curriculum framework.

The new Oregon standards represent a commitment to measure what we teach and to provide opportunities for all students in Oregon to achieve high standards.

The academic content standards approved by the Board represent the body of knowledge and skill that all students in Oregon are expected to master. Benchmarks or checkpoints have been established at grades 3, 5 and 8 to help teachers monitor student progress toward the Certificate of Initial Mastery (approximately grade 10) and the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (approximately grade 12). The benchmarks also help enable continuous improvement of instruction based on principles of quality management, data-based school accountability and program monitoring.

Discussion

School districts are making progress in implementing these standards and curriculum changes and are sharing information, personnel and resources. However, their ability to achieve major reform is threatened by a lack of funding.

Implementing the content standards requires continuous staff development at the district level, reform of Oregon's teacher training programs, reorganization of the Department of Education and school facility upgrades.

School districts need clearly defined expectations, retraining of the workforce, parental and community support, and full funding of any new reform mandate. Most importantly, they need reasonable timelines for implementation. They also need high quality, continuous support from the Education Service Districts, the Oregon Department of Higher Education and the Oregon Legislature.

Schools agree with the need for academic content standards, and need the flexibility to deliver that content in a variety of ways that consider diverse learning strengths and needs among individual students.

Recommendations:

1. *That the State Legislature fund comprehensive staff development that would help districts retrain teachers to meet the content requirements of the Oregon Educational Act and fund the necessary retooling of facilities to provide appropriate learning environments for a 21st century education*

2. *That the State Legislature concentrate on funding elements of the Act according to scheduled state phase-in, giving districts flexibility to implement each element in the way that best meets their needs, to be later audited by the ODE as part of the standards process*

3. *That the Oregon business community reassess and strengthen its contribution to educational reform and its role in the school-to-work agenda. Oregon businesses were instrumental in demanding reform and now must make a meaningful effort to help fund it.*

II Performance Standards: How Well Schools Teach; How Well Students Learn

Issue

Performance standards have been established by the State Department of Education. They define how well students must perform on classroom and state assessments leading to the Certificate of Initial Mastery. The performance standards include minimum scores required for both classroom assessments and state assessments. Students will be required to be proficient

in the academic areas required for the Certificate of Initial Mastery according to the following phase-in schedule:

1998-1999	English, mathematics
1999-2000	English, mathematics, science
2000-2001	English, mathematics, science, social sciences
2001-2002	English, mathematics, science, social sciences, arts
2002-2003	English, mathematics, science, social sciences, arts, second language

Discussion

Performance standards describe specific levels of achievement that all students are expected to attain. These levels are not tied to any particular course and can be achieved by students over time as they gather knowledge and skill from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Student achievement is assessed in three ways:

1. State criterion-referenced testing (breadth of curriculum)
2. State performance assessments (application of knowledge)
3. Classroom work samples (teacher verification)

Implementing these procedures and acting on the resulting data will require large-scale professional development in every district.

Teacher performance evaluation will be based on:

1. Knowledge of the standards for which the teachers and their students are being held responsible. The teacher must guarantee that the standards are being addressed in the classroom.

2. Providing teaching in any one year that connects to the student's overall growth and development. The curriculum must be linked and flow logically from year to year to prepare students for achieving CIMs and CAMs.

3. The learning of new strategies to adapt their classrooms to the standards. This would include changes in grading practices and

assuming a role that is less oriented to simply judging student work and more oriented to providing motivation, direction and support.

4. Demonstrated ability to apply sound instructional theory in classroom practice, lesson planning and student achievement.

Program evaluation in the local school districts will include:

1. Use of data from assessments to analyze program effectiveness, set goals and performance indicators and measure progress continuously.

2. The ability to provide in-service and ongoing professional development in a climate of declining resources.

3. A balance that must be struck between local school decision making and site councils, and the direction and coordination for local and statewide assessment of standards.

4. Quality public relations and communications during the transition to the new system.

5. Provision of equity -- especially the provision of opportunities for students below standard to make continued progress toward achieving them.

6. Ongoing school-by-school and program-by-program analysis of students' academic achievement as a basis for collaborative establishment of school and district targets for improvement

7. Compliance with state standards as measured by an annual desk audit and periodic on-site inspections by ODE.

Recommendations

1. *The state will launch a major statewide communication program to help the general public understand the transition from the time-based system to the standards-based system.*

2. *The state will fund local communication efforts so that local districts can inform local communities and include them in school improvement efforts.*

3. *Training of teachers and other school staff will be provided to develop the skills needed in each district, building and classroom to implement the performance standards.*

4. *The state will provide adequate funding of state assessment so that the necessary uniform student achievement data is available to sustain research and program development at the local level.*

III Opportunity to Learn Standards: Ways to Help Assure Learning

In order for students to achieve, they must have appropriate opportunities to learn.

The new standards-based system represents a social contract between the state, local district and community that says all students will be given the opportunity to learn up to standards levels.

New standards of student performance will be unfair to students unless the students are given an adequate opportunity to learn the content that is being assessed.

A rich and well-tested research base has established a number of variables in the way education is delivered that clearly affect a student's ability to learn. These include the following key factors:

A. Class Size

Issue

Class size refers to the number of students per classroom. It is not the same as the staff-to-student ratio in a school or district, since "staff" includes more than classroom teachers (such as aides, special subject area teachers, counselors, etc.).

Key questions related to class size are:

- What are the cost/benefit tradeoffs in reducing or increasing class size?
- Does a student learn better and achieve more in a small class than a large one?
- How much of a difference does class size make in academic achievement?
- What size should a class be at each grade level to achieve optimal learning?

Discussion

The issue of how large or small classes should be, and how much class size affects a student's ability to learn, has been a subject of major debate. The experience of school administrators, teachers and parents tells them that small class sizes allow for more individualized attention to students. Research generally indicates that when classes have fewer than 20 students per teacher, there are achievement gains; above 30 students per teacher, there are achievement slow-downs. Some studies and virtually all teachers indicate that in between 20 and 30 there are clear connections to behavioral problems, less individualized attention, extraneous stimulation and a different classroom atmosphere that affect students and their ability to learn.

A 1996 research report from Dixon and Sexton concluded:

1. "When we examine the body of research we find that reductions in class size can increase student achievement by substantial amounts as measured by common standardized tests but only if class size is reduced to something below 20 students per class. Benefits of reduction are primarily focused...within grades K-3."

   Dixon and Sexton found that, "Benefits of reduced class size are greatest for students in early primary grades, for reading and math, and for educationally challenged and lower socio-economic students."

2. Smith and Glass analyzed 130 studies on the effects of class size reduction and concluded that "reductions have beneficial effects on both pupil and teacher affective outcomes and the teaching process itself." However, this is only true if size is reduced to something below 20 students per class. According to the findings of Smith and Glass, class sizes of 20 to 40 students reflect only superficial changes in student achievement. They concluded that, when classes have more than 30 students, their actual size makes little difference with respect to academic achievement.

3. Research presented by Ronald F. Ferguson on the effect of various types of expenditures on the quality of schooling in almost 900 school districts in Texas found that, "Reducing the number of students per teacher to eighteen (which means class sizes in the low twenties) is very important for performance in the primary grades." It also found that "Large classes lead to lower scores in grades one through seven...Each additional student over 18 causes the district average score to fall by between one-tenth and one-fifth of a standard deviation in the interdistrict distribution of test scores for grades one through seven."

Costs are a key consideration, in that class size is the single most important factor affecting overall educational costs. In 1995-96 the Oregon Department of Education recorded about 497,500 Average Daily Membership and 22,600 classroom teachers, or, in simple averages, a student-teacher ratio of 22:1. This varies, as it should, by grade level, subject, school and district. But if the state wanted to change class size by one, to get an average ratio of 21:1, it would need 1,090 more teachers. At a cost of approximately $50,000 per teacher for salary, benefits and fixed costs, the state would need $54.5 million more.

Smaller class sizes also contribute to better adjusted students, with healthier attitudes and behavioral patterns, who learn significantly more. Society may save other costs over the long-term related to delinquency, welfare, unemployment, etc.

The issue of class size comes into play as school districts strive to comply with rigorous state standards in math, science, reading, language arts and foreign language. At present only about half of the high school students in

the state would be able to meet state standards. To achieve higher performance will require more staffing and additional program.

While larger class sizes can work in some subject areas and for some groupings of students, generally, smaller class sizes help students get the attention they need from the teacher. This School Funding Coalition estimates that the goal of giving all students the opportunity to reach standards would require enough staff to create an average class size of less than 20 for 50 percent of students who have historically not met the new higher levels in the standards.

The Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NWASC) requires the following class sizes in order for schools to be accredited:

Elementary School

Kindergarten:	No more than 25 students per class
Grades 1-3:	No more than 30 students per class
Grades 4-8:	No more than 32 students per class (these sizes may be exceeded by up to five students if there is a full-time paraprofessional in the class).

The NWASC standards state that the student-to-professional staff ratio at the elementary school level shall not exceed 22:1, and that a teacher shall not have more than 150 student contacts per day.

Middle School and High School

NWASC does not require a specific class size for middle or high school grades, but does require that the daily teaching assignment at these levels shall not exceed six hours and the student contacts for a teacher shall not exceed 160 per day. The student-to-professional staff ratio (in this case including paraprofessionals as well as teachers, with each paraprofessional counting as one-third of a teacher FTE) shall not exceed 25:1.

Recommendations

1. *The state will provide sufficient staff at the elementary school level to maintain these average class sizes:*

Kindergarten:	*Fewer than 20 students per class*
Grades 1-2:	*Fewer than 20 students per class*
Grades 3-5/6:	*Fewer than 26 students per class.*

2. *At the middle and high school level, provide a student-to-professional staff ratio sufficient to maintain average class sizes below 30.*

3. *For the 50 percent of children who will need additional assistance to meet the Oregon Performance Standards, provide sufficient staffing to maintain class sizes of 15-17.*

4. *For Alternative Learning Centers, where students require a personalized education plan, provide enough teachers to maintain class sizes of 10 to 15*

B. Quality Teachers

Issue

It has been said that "teaching is the most important element of successful learning." For students to receive a high quality education, they must have teachers who are well-qualified, properly trained and able to continue their professional development in order to provide the kind of learning demanded by new reforms and the increasing pace of change in our society.

Discussion

A September 1996 report called "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future" from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future states:

"The single most important strategy for achieving America's educational goals: A blueprint for recruiting, preparing and supporting excellent teachers in all of America's schools."

It adds:

"American students are entitled to teachers who know their subjects, understand their students and what they need and have developed the skills required to make learning come alive."

Teacher qualifications have become increasingly important, as new reforms are implemented, as students are required to reach higher levels of skill and competence, and as the challenge increases to teach children from diverse backgrounds.

The Commission offers five recommendations to address these concerns:

1. Get serious about standards, for both students and teachers.
2. Reinvent teacher preparation and professional development.
3. Fix teacher recruitment and put qualified teachers in every classroom.
4. Encourage and reward teacher knowledge and skill.
5. Create schools that are organized for student and teacher success

In Oregon, qualified teachers are becoming increasingly scarce for math, science and technology specialties as well as second language, special education and secondary principals. The PERS report on the aging of the education workforce suggests this trend will accelerate.

Additional qualified teachers are also needed to keep up with growing student enrollment. Enrollments are projected to continue increasing based on demographics and in-migration.

Salaries will need to be sufficient to attract more persons into education, given the competition from other employers and the cost of pre-service (obtaining a BA degree and a fifth year). Research by David Card and Alan

(obtaining a BA degree and a fifth year). Research by David Card and Alan Krueger shows that teacher salaries, the number of students per teacher and the length of the school year are all statistically significant predictors of their students' later earnings.

It is also important that working conditions are attractive to prospective teachers. According to Ronald F. Ferguson's research in Texas, "Factors that make a district more attractive than its neighbors can include the salary that it pays, the characteristics of the students and their families, perceived working conditions and commuting distances from where potential teachers live."

Factors such as unstable funding, job security, hostile environment (community attacks and criticism, and ballot measure campaigns that threaten the system), and high and diverse demands make it more difficult to attract and retain high quality staff. As an example, last year 280 teachers resigned from the Portland Public Schools for reasons related to job insecurity, unstable and declining funding and lack of community support.

Just as important as hiring qualified teachers is providing professional development opportunities to help them continually improve their knowledge, skills and teaching approaches. Ongoing staff development is characteristic of all high-performing organizations, and schools should be no exception.

According to a 1994 survey of Oregon employers, conducted by the Oregon Economic Development Department and Oregon Department of Education, about 30 percent of managers and administrators and 25 percent of professionals receive 40 or more hours of training per year. The amount of informal, on-the-job training is about five times greater than that amount of formal training. Most larger businesses devote an average of from four to six percent of their resources to development and training. Schools are able to devote less than one percent on average. With annual expenditures of approximately $2.65 billion, four percent for development and training would be $106 million.

The survey of Oregon employers also provides a definition of high performance management that includes these four elements: Focus on the customer, employee involvement in decision-making, support for teamwork and commitment to continuous improvement. These concepts apply equally well to educational institutions.

Staff development will be particularly important in Oregon in order to retrain teachers in light of the new requirements. Workforce retooling is a major ingredient in meeting the new higher standards. The right student-teacher relationship is critical for learning to occur, and that relationship is enhanced when teachers feel prepared, ready and confident, with the right skills and attitude.

Even if the state had the right number of teachers on board to meet the 21st Century education goals, they are not likely trained in all the areas needed for the new paradigm. Time and money is needed to help them understand new requirements, develop new ways of delivering educational experiences and teaming with other educators, students, parents and the community.

Recommendations

1. *Create financial incentives for people to pursue a career in education, particularly in areas of special need (for example, low-interest loans or reimbursements for teachers to extend their higher education to a fifth year or masters degree).*

2. *Provide tuition or rebates for people who become teachers and teach for a certain number of years in the fields of science, math, second language and technology for a certain number of years.*

3. *Reinstate or reinvest in college of education programs that were historically excellent (e.g., the University of Oregon Resident Master Teaching Program, and the Beginning Teacher Mentor Program at Western Oregon State College.*

4. *Invest $80 million (four percent of the General Fund budget for K-12) per year in staff development. Pre- and in-service training should lead to mastery of course content and techniques to teach it meaningfully, with particular attention to the material in the content standards. Staff development should also include strategies for reaching diverse student populations and students with different learning styles.*

5. *Invest in regional Educational Service District's capacity to deliver in-service, particularly in content areas that are "new" or targeted areas.*

6. *Encourage industries that benefit from a highly educated worker pool to share their employee development resources with local school districts.*

7. *Provide adequate funding for retraining teachers to use and teach about new technologies.*

8. *Support and promote integration of state and county ancillary services in the schools such as day care, health clinics, counseling, etc.*

C. Time

Issue

Even in a student-based system, quality of education is affected by the amount of time students are in school each year, each day, for each course and for each class. Time on-task is frequently related to student performance. The issue of time also raises questions about provisions for pre-school and kindergarten, and alternative learning centers. Finally, time is a key concern with respect to teachers: how many hours they work on which tasks, and for how much of that time they are paid.

Discussion

One of the main concerns about time is summarized in the report from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future:

"Teachers do not have enough sustained time with their students each day and over the years to come to know them well and to tackle difficult kinds of learning with them; neither do they have time with their colleagues to work on improving what they do."

This is true even though American teachers teach significantly more hours per day and year than teachers in any other nation. According to the Commission report, American teachers teach more than 1,000 hours per year -- as compared to the 600 to 800 hours per year in other industrialized countries, depending on grade level. According to a report by the U.S. General Accounting Office, Oregon teachers teach more hours than teachers in any other state in the U.S. In most European and Asian countries, teachers spend

between 17 and 20 hours of a 40- to 45-hour work week in the classroom with students. The remaining time is used for planning and working with one another, as well as with parents and students. Teachers in the United States typically complete their planning, locate materials, talk with parents, meet individually with students, consult with one another and grade papers after school hours, and often well into the evenings and on weekends.

At present, the state standard amount of instructional time per year for various grade levels is:

Kindergarten	405 hours
Grades 1-3	810 hours
Grades 4-8	900 hours
Grades 9-12	990 hours

While some believe the number of instructional hours should be increased, the greatest need appears to be more planning and preparation time, so teachers can make the most effective use of their instructional hours.

The standard number of hours in the school day is:

K	3 hours per day
1-3	6 hours per day
4-8	6.5 hours per day
9-12	7 hours per day

The issue of time becomes critically important as Oregon moves to a standards-based system, where the goal is bringing every child up to standards. Remediation time will be needed for those students who take longer to meet the standards. Time and programs will be required to work with the harder-to-educate or learners with non-traditional learning styles. Similarly, additional coursework and a variety of alternative learning plans and environments will be needed to get all students to higher levels of achievement. Schools will need to be more innovative than ever in developing vehicles for student learning. All districts will need options, and those options will affect the amount of time required for teaching.

A study by the Education Commission of the States of 20 school districts in six states engaged in school reform showed that the early stages of reform

require the most time from administrators. However, teachers and parents must give more time and become more involved over extended periods for reform to be successful. Teachers have often had to voluntarily extend their work day or work week, without additional pay, in order to bring about changes while continuing to deliver traditional services.

Recommendations

For classroom instruction:

1. *Provide funding for summer school/extended year.*

2. *Fund evening school for grades 7 through 12; Saturday school; and tutorial sessions before and after school.*

3. *Provide funding for a longer school day, to allow for more instructional time and more course registration options.*

4. *Provide funding to extend students' on-task time (the amount of time they actually spend on learning and completing assignments). Schools should emphasize more important curricula by assigning more class time for it. They should also provide students with time to do general academic work on the campus.*

5. *Provide funding for full-day kindergarten.*

6. *Fund pre-school for students in need (Headstart-type programs).*

7. *Eliminate the hours-per-year requirement; it is not consistent with a standards-based system.*

For teachers:

8. *Use 12-month contracts with teachers, administrators and support staff.*

9. *Create a work design for teachers (using the 12-month model) that allows adequate time for:*

- *Meeting requirements for higher performance*
- *Time with students*
- *Study leaves/sabbaticals*
- *Curriculum/instruction planning*
- *Design of individual student plans*
- *Organizational development*
- *Professional development*
- *School improvement planning*
- *Assessment and evaluation*
- *Parent communication*
- *Professional/technical experience*
- *Vacations*
- Collaboration

D. Learning Materials/Tools

Issue

Students need certain resources such as textbooks, lab equipment, classroom equipment and supplies, and, increasingly, computers and software, in order to learn. The supply of resources must be both adequate and up-to-date. In addition, teachers will need more and various materials and tools in order to help students with different learning styles reach the new achievement standards.

Discussion

Schools in Oregon are required to replace their textbooks every six years. The question is often whether they have the resources to do so. The importance of timely replacement is best illustrated through an example related to history books: Imagine students reading from books that still talk about the Soviet Union, which no longer exists, and never mention a word about the Persian Gulf War.

In addition, as approaches to teaching change, new materials are needed. For example, subjects such as math and science are increasingly being taught in

an integrated fashion. New textbooks and supplementary materials are needed to help teachers combine those two subjects.

Of key importance are the needs associated with educational reform. These needs are two-fold: First, the need for materials to support individualized teaching. Some students do not learn in traditional ways. If the goal is to bring all students up to standards, teachers will need a variety of tools and approaches from which to choose. They will also need more communication and involvement with parents to help each child do his or her best.

Second, educational reform increases the need for technology, including computers, software and access to the Internet, as a way to give students up-to-date skills and knowledge. Computerized learning may also be an effective way to help students get the individualized instruction they need to reach academic standards. For this reason, Oregon school administrators are seeking to eventually achieve computer access for every student, not just every classroom.

A study called "The Allocation of Money and Its Impact on the States" conducted by the Education Commission of the States looked at the costs associated with educational reform in 20 school districts in six states (California, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine and South Carolina). The study found that among these districts the number one expense in implementing educational reform was technology, followed closely by professional development for teachers and staff, then expenditures for special populations of students.

Teachers will also need support materials and clerical support to carry out the filing, record-keeping, testing and assessment associated with educational reform. Clerical help can allow teachers to spend more of their time on lesson preparation, helping individual students and pursuing professional development.

Recommendations

1. *Provide adequate state funding to purchase and install the necessary infrastructure for every public school classroom in Oregon to network and tie into the Internet. The Oregon Public Education Network (OPEN) includes both Internet and intranet networks that connect schools and*

educational service districts (ESDs). At present, every ESD in the state is either connected to OPEN or in the process of becoming so.

2. *Enhance the statewide distance learning network and help more schools access and use Ed-Net.*

3. *Provide adequate funding to provide one computer for every teacher and one for every two students, with continuous upgrades, and a family lending "library" of computers and software used by students.*

4. *Assure adequate money per pupil to purchase current textbooks and software. In addition, provide $20 per student for other equipment and consumables needed for learning in the post-reform era.*

5. *Create a statewide library system, to connect schools throughout the state and allow them to share books and materials.*

6. *Provide telephone access in every classroom for teachers and staff.*

7. *Assure adequate clerical support to help teachers carry out the paperwork and processes associated with individualized student teaching and educational reform.*

E. School Environment and Culture

Issue

A safe, orderly environment is a critical prerequisite for students to learn. In addition, a school culture that focuses on students, highlights academic achievement, honors diversity, fosters respect and encourages the development of the whole child (including civic and social as well as educational development) provides a supportive setting conducive to learning.

Discussion

Maslow's hierarchy of needs tells us that an individual can only satisfy his or her higher needs after the fundamental needs (i.e., for food, shelter, safety,

etc.) have been met. So it is in a school setting: The fundamental need for safety and order must be satisfied before students can learn.

Research indicates that public concern about safety and order in schools supersedes all else. If communities and families do not believe a school is safe, nothing else matters -- not higher standards, school reform, new programs, new approaches or any other thing.

A report called *First Things First: What Americans Expect from the Public Schools*, published by the Public Agenda Foundation, states:

> *"Americans are concerned that too many public schools are so disorderly and undisciplined that learning cannot take place. And the public's concern about order has been joined in the last few years by a disturbing new fear -- that schools are violent and unsafe...*
>
> *"We must demonstrate, in every fashion possible, that the basics are being taught and the schools are safe, orderly and purposeful enough for learning to take place. The goals of reform are not being rejected by the general public. In fact citizens endorse the core principles, including holding students to higher academic standards. But there is a prior claim that must be shown to be satisfied -- safety and order -- and this must be in front of our agenda as we communicate about our schools."*

A safe, orderly environment means the school is clean, safe from hazards and in good repair. It has enough physical space to accommodate all students safely, and enough teachers and classrooms to ensure optimum class size. The facility itself is safe and modern, with safeguards against asbestos, radon, earthquakes, etc.

Staff and students are expected to behave respectfully toward each other. They feel protected from potential violence. Drugs and violence must have been eradicated. The school has security personnel, video and other technical surveillance equipment as needed.

Students must also feel that they are emotionally safe when at school. In other words, they should not be subject to emotional or verbal abuse. The school culture should promote respect for diversity and protect student

populations from discrimination, whether based on gender, race or sexual orientation.

Differences and diversity need to be valued for the contribution they can make. Students of various backgrounds should be allowed to make their unique contribution in a manner that gives them respect and a sense of belonging. If schools can find ways to help students feel accepted among peers, they can eliminate the need for gang affiliation or socially inappropriate groups.

Overall, the school should project an atmosphere of quiet, calm, cooperation, teamwork and discipline. In the classroom, students should feel that they are respected and their opinions valued, and teachers should encourage rational discussion and disagreement. The overall school culture should foster learning and demonstrate concern for students' well-being.

A safe, orderly, disciplined environment has a positive effect on teachers as well as students, and contributes to higher motivation and performance.

Schools should also provide co-curricular activities and activities that promote the students social and civic development. Co-curricular activities should be expanded to emphasize lifelong learning and individual activities, both of which can be greatly expanded through use of the Internet. Students who are purposefully engaged in after-school co-curricular activities achieve higher grades, drop out less and have a much lower incidence of juvenile offenses than students who do not participate.

The civic development of future generations has become a more targeted area of concern in the wake of recent studies such as those reported in Robert Putnam's article in the *Journal of Democracy* called "Bowling Alone." The article notes a steady decline in Americans' participation in a broad range of civic and social organizations -- from bowling leagues to churches to PTAs and Boy Scouts. The findings suggest a disengagement from civic life and a fragmentation of community.

At the same time, it has been observed that one of the 10 behaviors students will need to be successful in the 21st century is pride in citizenship and knowledge of the individual responsibilities in a democracy. According to a

Council of 55 expert advisers convened by the American Association of School Administrators:

> *"Students should feel empowered and motivated to constantly improve their communities, state and nation. Rather than simply being critical, students who will live most of their lives in the 21st century will need to take such pride in the potential of democracy and such responsibility as citizens that they will shape society to become even more civil."*

Schools can play a valuable role by encouraging student volunteerism, providing opportunities for community participation and educating students on the responsibilities and rewards of civic involvement.

The *Handbook of Research on Improving Student Achievement* published by the Educational Research Service reports that students, parents, teachers and others involved in school-sponsored community participation find it to be a "powerful learning experience." Students who participate "tend to have a greater sense of social responsibility, increased moral development, enhanced self-esteem, more positive attitudes toward adults, and improved skills and knowledge directly related to the experience."

This suggests a role for the schools in character education and instilling values. Teaching students social values such as honesty, respect and cooperation, and the skills to use them can help create the desired climate at school and in our society as a whole, and can help prepare students to become productive, caring and involved citizens.

Recommendations

1. *All schools should be earthquake-safe, radon- and asbestos-free and all plumbing should be lead-free.*

2. *The state Common Curriculum Goals should support community service education.*

3. *Sufficient administrative and paraprofessional staff should be assured to maintain a safe, orderly environment.*

4. *All schools will have emergency procedures that involve the entire community with suggestions and outlines provided by the Department of Education and/or Emergency Services.*
5. *Fund comprehensive co-curricular activities that appeal to a broad range of student interests and provide after-school activities for the growing number of "latch-key" children in Oregon.*

6. *Legislation will be reviewed to eliminate unnecessary and costly fines for maintenance violations unless there is obvious negligence or refusal to correct on the part of the school.*

7. *Substance abuse prevention education and comprehensive counseling services will be funded at all grade levels.*

F. Leadership and Governance

Issue

One of the key questions involving any type of change is, "Who will lead it?" And, in the case of school reform, "Who will oversee and implement it?" For a standards-based system to succeed in Oregon, a variety of constituent groups will need to show leadership and become involved in reform and funding efforts. Chief among these are those trained for educational leadership -- superintendents and principals. Research literature on school improvement emphasizes the importance of the principal; i.e., the building superintendent and principal make or break a quality school system. Other important leadership will include state and local leaders; school boards, administrators, teachers and staff; employers and employees; and parents and citizen committees.

Issues of governance include education of constituent groups on the implications and requirements of reform; parent and employee involvement; partnerships between the schools and businesses and community groups; management and supervision of change; community support for the schools; school improvement and program development; and research and evaluation.

Discussion

First, there are clear differences between leaders in business and leaders in education. The business leader will generally have control over raw materials, labor, design, research and production -- the factors needed to produce results. Business leaders produce a uniform product or service and are not subject to the whims of public financing and control.

Education leaders, superintendents and principals, have almost none of these factors in their favor. However, the leadership demands are similar. Both types of leaders must negotiate between contending factors to achieve organizational progress. Both must initiate and sustain change; both must make decisions and take action before all variables are known. And, to be successful, both must satisfy the public.

The transformation to a standards-based system requires leadership on two fronts: within the schools (educational leadership), and outside of them (political and civic leadership).

Within the schools, the principals, teachers, staff and parents will be the primary change agents. Research on effective schooling has found that the principal is a key factor in schools that have high performance. Principals play a critical role as both intellectual and instructional leaders. They can lead the expansion of learning and the development of community within the school. An article called *Teachers for the 21st Century: Redefining Professionalism* (by Hugh T. Sockett, director of the Institute for Educational Transformation at George Mason University) suggests principals lead by "talking with individual teachers about how they conceive their future in a classroom; negotiating opportunities for in-depth work; facilitating open communication between parents, children and teachers; establishing contacts with academics who share the vision; distributing leadership opportunities across a school's faculty; and spending some time themselves in serious reflection about their own situation."

The most effective superintendents are transformational leaders. They convey their conviction that there is enormous untapped potential in their staff and their students. They reject concepts of mediocrity in staff performance and student performance. They lead toward levels of achievement far beyond expectations. The superintendent as educational leader has skills in designing, implementing and evaluating school culture and climate; building support for schools;

developing curriculum and instruction; choosing, training, encouraging and developing staff; preparing budgets and allocating resources; and conducting research, evaluation and planning. They understand their accountability for educating students and responding to the deepest desires of the community for the future of its children.

Principals can create a process for shared decision making, in which family, staff and students are all involved in making decisions. The principal can also create an orientation to continuous improvement in the school, and can facilitate debate and reflective discussion among faculty members.

Teachers also benefit from a principal who serves as a mentor and role model. An article in the May 1996 NASSP Bulletin called *The Principal as Teacher: a Model for Instructional Leadership* notes that "high teacher satisfaction with their professional role depends on perceiving principals as instructional leaders. Of specific relevance to the Principal as Teacher model is the finding that an excellent method of obtaining greater teacher commitment is for principals to be role models for teachers."

According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor and the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industry, nationally and in Oregon the ratio of management to staff in public schools is between 4.2 (Oregon) and 4.5 (U.S.) per 100 employees. This compares to more than 6 per 100 employees in the private sector. Oregon schools are undermanaged at a time when attention to vision, leadership and accountability is most critical.

Outside the school walls, elected decision-makers as well as voters play a critical role in school reform: They determine how much funding it will receive. An article called *School Finance Must Support Education Reform* in the Fall, 1994, State Education Leader newsletter states:

> *"If successful schools are to spread throughout the nation, then school funding must become part of school reform. Already, factors inside and outside the education system are forcing a new order of business for school finance... Gone are the days of `ask and ye shall receive.'"*

For reform to succeed, community members must also understand and support the changes being made. State and local efforts must be made to

fully and clearly explain the demands and benefits of reform and the necessity for change in the delivery of public education. In September, 1996, the School Funding Coalition of the Oregon Association of School Executives advised:

> *There must be a clear connection between the change mandated and the well-being of children -- the better future we hope to have for today's students. There has to be parental support, parental involvement and a commitment to each child's education. It is not beyond reason for the governor to lead a major marketing effort sponsored by the business community, and to lead the process of community education needed to come to new levels of full community commitment.*

In August, 1995, COSA emphasized the importance of developing a community-wide base of support and understanding of public education, stating in its newsletter: "If we cannot re-engage the public at a neighborhood-by-neighborhood, grassroots level in the next few years, public education will have as rough a go as any of us have every experienced." In some cases, technology may provide a way for soliciting input from constituents and increasing the participation of a public that is increasingly active and often unable to attend meetings or work on committees.

Employers also need to be closely involved with the education of students rather than just hiring them once they are "educated." Emphases on higher standards and more school-to-work programs demand stronger business/employer partnerships.

State leaders can set the stage for these efforts by clarifying the vision for education and the requirements for successful reform. State elected officials need to develop a coherent state strategy for planning, funding and implementing reform. They must also review regulations to make sure they give schools more flexibility for how to implement changes at the local level. The Department of Education should be given a redefined role to support local improvement efforts through performance assessments, accountability and technical support.

The shift to a standards-based system will put more pressure on local school boards, who often provide a sounding board for citizens and parents. Boards

of Education will need to be spokespeople for the changes occurring in education and should continually receive professional development to help them in that capacity. School boards will especially need to keep state leaders informed of the progress in restructuring efforts.

Recommendations

1. *Provide adequate funds for sufficient administration to meet the leadership and management responsibilities of reform: a management-to-staff ratio equal to private sector high-performance organizations.*

2. *Require increased leadership from the Oregon Department of Education, especially in researching and evaluating the restructuring efforts that are occurring.*

3. *Increase support for OSBA and COSA to allow for staff development of school board members and administrators, so the goals of increased student achievement can be identified, pursued and achieved.*

4. *The legislature should fund a means of receiving feedback from the public and employers on how well the schools are educating new members of the workforce, and how cooperation between the schools, business community and general public can be improved.*

5. *Reinstitute funding for the Oregon Professional Development Center and the Teacher Mentor Program, both of which have been discontinued in recent years for lack of funding. These programs help teachers develop instructional leadership and innovate as well as implement new teaching methods.*

G. Infrastructure/Services

Issue

The services inside a school are integral to a high-performing system. They include student services, legal services, communications, business services, personnel services, transportation services, data processing and telecommunications. They also include the infrastructure for tracking student

achievement. Key internal processes related to educational reform are data- and record-keeping, achievement assessment and scoring.

Discussion

Educational reform in Oregon will require that students are assessed on three bases: criteria-referenced standards, performance assessment, and work samples. At present, many schools have systems in place for administering and managing these processes. With respect to work samples, it is unclear how they are to be collected, from whom, and with what guidelines.

Of greatest concern are the new data-keeping requirements. To track student performance, school districts will need to collect data every year, and transfer it from school to school as needed, making sure it is in a form that others can access and understand. The districts will need similar linkages to post-secondary institutions. There is currently no funding for the schools to put their assessment, tracking and training (for what?) processes in place.

School systems also are responsible for evaluating staff performance, providing corrective training and complying with stringent fair dismissal regulations. It is imperative that school districts be adequately staffed with qualified supervisory personnel to meet this expectation.

At present, because of the huge expense, many school districts are unable to provide accurate data to the Department of Education in areas such as finances, demographics, etc. In addition, payroll and accounts payable may be done in ways that are not cost-effective. A communications network is needed to make it easier for schools to electronically collect, communicate and transfer data.

Legal services are another area of concern. Many school districts fear that a standards-based system will place them in a position of being liable if a particular student cannot meet standards. They are concerned that the goal of helping each student reach standards will be construed as a guarantee. No school can make such a pledge, given the myriad factors that affect learning. However, most schools do not have legal representation to defend themselves, and when they do get it, the case has mushroomed and become even more difficult and costly to resolve.

Recommendations

1. *Provide funds to help all districts receive, report and transfer data in a uniform manner.*

2. *Provide legal services or advice equitably among school districts, regardless of the district's size, location or ability to pay.*

3. *Require sufficient management and supervisory personnel with appropriate qualifications to assure staff are held accountable for performance at a level comparable to new high standards for students.*

4. *Maintain sufficient levels of staffing to provide for transportation, maintenance, accounting, budget management, legal services, communication, personnel services, data processing, food services and telecommunications.*

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